

## SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Temperament

Temperament refers to the innate behavioral and emotional tendencies that individuals exhibit from an early age. In order to foster healthy and harmonious relationships between parents and children, it is imperative for parents to gain a deep understanding of both their own temperament and that of their children.

Recognizing and appreciating the unique temperamental traits of parents and children lays the foundation for effective communication, conflict resolution, and positive parenting experiences. Understanding one's own temperament allows parents to manage their reactions and responses more effectively, promoting a supportive and nurturing environment. Furthermore, comprehending the temperamental nuances of each child enables parents to tailor their parenting approach, fostering a stronger connection and promoting the development of a child's unique strengths. This manual emphasizes the significance of self-reflection and empathy as key tools for building a resilient and loving family dynamic.

## Temperament is biologically based and is relatively stable throughout life.

### Nine Temperament Traits

- Activity Level
- Regularity
- Approachability
- Sensitivity
- Adaptability
- Intensity
- Mood
- Distractibility
- Persistence

Exploring and comparing a parent's and child's temperament on a scale unveils a nuanced understanding of their unique personalities and the dynamics within their relationship. The temperament scale serves as a valuable tool, offering insights into shared traits as well as distinctions between parent and child. Identifying similarities provides a foundation for connection and shared experiences, fostering mutual understanding.

Conversely, recognizing differences sheds light on potential challenges, prompting thoughtful discussions about communication styles, conflict resolution, and parenting approaches. The scale becomes a compass for navigating the complexities of their relationship, allowing both parent and child to leverage their respective temperamental strengths and adapt where needed. Ultimately, this exploration becomes a catalyst for fostering a harmonious and supportive environment where both parent and child can thrive and grow together.

## Temperament Scale

A temperament scale is a tool used to assess and measure an individual's temperament.

### Activity Level

- How much physical activity do you do during the day? Are you energetic and active, always on the go (high), or are you quieter and do things slower (low)?
- How much does the child wiggle and move around when being read to, sitting at a table, or playing alone?



### Regularity

- How predictable are your daily patterns (eating, sleeping, bathroom, etc.)? Are you more regular/predictable (high) or unregular/unpredictable (low)?
- Is the child regular about eating times, sleeping times, amount of sleep needed, and bowel movements?



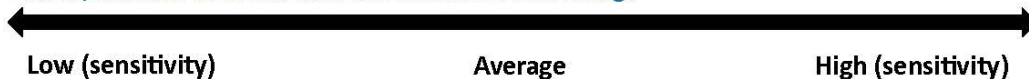
### Approachability

- How do you react to new people, experiences, places, and things? Do you hesitate (low) or dive right in (high)?
- How does the child usually react for the first time to *new* people, foods, toys, and activities?



### Sensitivity

- How do you react to sensory stimulation? Are you highly sensitive to textures, tastes, lights, sounds, temperature, and smells?
- How aware is the child of slight noises, slight differences in temperature, differences in taste/texture of food, and the texture of clothing?



### Adaptability

- How well do you handle unexpected changes and transitions? Are you flexible (high), or do you need time to adjust (low)?
- How quickly does the child adapt to changes in their routine or to new foods, people, or places?





Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work

Temperament Scale continued:

Intensity

- How intense are your reactions to things? Are you dramatic, loud and expressive (high) or quiet and calm (low)?
How strong are the child's reactions? Does the child experience extreme emotions, or do they just smile and fuss mildly?



Mood

- How do you feel about things? Are you generally pleasant and joyful (high) or unpleasant and grouchy (low)?
How much of the time does the child show pleasant, joyful behavior compared with unpleasant crying and fussing behavior?



Distractibility

- How easily are you distracted by things in your immediate environment? Do you hear/see every little thing (high), or can you engage in an activity without distraction?
Is the child easily distracted, or does she or he ignore distractions? Will the child continue to work or play when other noises or children are present?



Persistence

- How long can you continue an activity without interruption? Do you tend to persist until the task is completed (high), or do you get frustrated and quit (low)?
How long does the child continue with one activity? Does the child usually continue if it is difficult?





Bringing the Protective Factors Framework  
to Life in Your Work

## Social Emotional Competence in the Family Context

### Family Relationships as the Foundation

A child's social and emotional competence is built on their relationship with their parents. Research shows that nurturing and bonding between the parent and child - from the earliest possible time results in children who are more socially and emotionally competent as children and later as adults.

A child's social and emotional competence can both reflect and affect their relationship with family members or the situation in the home.

**Reflect:** A child's social and emotional competence may mirror the dynamics of their home environment.

**Affect:** Variations in family dynamics can significantly impact a child's social and emotional competence.

## Facilitate Children's Social and Emotional Development

### Two-Pronged Approach

Healthy social and emotional development does not evolve naturally but requires actively nurturing, supporting, and promoting positive environments and experiences for children.

*"The course of social emotional development - whether healthy or unhealthy - depends on the quality of nurturing attachment and stimulation that a child experiences. Numerous research studies show that a relationship with a consistent, caring and attuned adult who actively promotes the development of these dimensions is essential for healthy social-emotional outcomes in young children."*

*- Center for the Study of Social Policy*



**Working with parents** so that they can help develop social & emotional skills and have strategies and techniques to respond to challenging behaviors in positive ways.

**Direct work with children** to help them develop social and emotional skills.

